The church of St. John was founded A.D. 1309, by the Emperor Henry VII., father of John, the blind king of Bohemia, and Duke of Luxemburg, killed at the battle of Crecy; and whose remains were deposited in their twelfth sepulchre by the pious care of the present King of Prussia on the 26th of August (the 492nd anniversary of his death), A.D. 1838, at Castel, near Saarburg. But the greater parts of the present church, and of its late accompanying monastery, were rebuilt A.D. 1624, by Charles II., King of Spain, as indicated by the following chronogram above its portal:

CaroLo regnante,
Montereo VICes reglas beLgIo gerente,
phILIppo aremberglo gVbernante,
hospItaLe sanCto Iohanni saCrat Vr.

W. BROMET, M.D.

FOUNDATION OF THE BUILDERS' BENEVOLENT INSTITUTION.

On the 19th inst. a numerous meeting was held at the Freemasons' Tavern, for the purpose of establishing an Institution for the benefit of decayed members of the building trades. Mr. Biers took the chair, and was supported by Lord Robert Grosvenor, Sir Benjamin Hall, Colonel Wood, Mr. David Salomons, Mr. C. Cochrane, Mr. Stephen Bird, Mr. Geo. Bird, Mr. G. Spencer Smith, Mr. McGill, Mr. Higgs, and others. Lord Dudley Stuart appeared at the close of the meeting.

The chairman, in opening the meeting, and expressing the pleasure he felt in appearing in so good a cause, in which he was sure that none could be more zealous, although he regretted that no abler advocate was in his place, proceeded to observe that although almost every business-class in the metropolis had an institution on whose benevolent aid decayed but respectable members had it in their power to fall back, yet builders as a class were still without any thing of the kind;—the only exceptions being merely local, such as the City associations, on which the metropolitan building trades in general had no claim whatever. The Benevolent Institution whose foundation-stone it was now full time, therefore, to lay, was designed on a more extensive scale of operation; its object, indeed, being not merely confined to the relief of subscribers, not merely limited even to the masters employed in the metropolitan building trades in general, but for behoof of every one of their class in the empire able to establish a reputable character, whether he had ever been, in his better days, a subscriber, or not, to the institution. The number of persons, in the metropolis alone, dependent on the building business for their support was immense. The number of families dependent on the funds expended in metropolitan building, or on the earnings drawn therefrom, might be stated at nearly 30,000. The builder's life might be likened to that of a sailor, who begins with a fair wind, and has all plain sailing till the storms of adversity come on, over which he has no control. Although designed in the first place for decayed masters in the building business, the masters, in their endeavours to establish this useful institution, had not been thinking of themselves alone; they had not been forgetful of their workmen; for by one of the rules and regulations, any workman in the employment of a subscriber, meeting with an accident, might have relief from the fund, so that although he went to the hospital, while there, his wife and children, deprived of his earnings, would not be compelled, as hitherto, to part with not only their clothing furniture and utensils, but even the very tools with which alone their bread-winner could provide them all with food. A weekly contribution of 4s. to 5s., would prevent this cruel alternative, which, as most of those present well knew, necessity had compelled thousands on thousands to adopt. He felt and pleaded more for such as these than even for unfortunate masters. Hitherto he had been speaking of a relief fund; but the rules of the institution also provided for the establishment of almshouses. These, however, would form a subject for the future consideration of the subscribers, to whose views and decision it would be submitted when an adequate fund had been collected. It was proposed that 4,000*l.* or 5,000*l.* should be raised before any relief was granted. He could not help remarking, however, that even already deserving objects, unaware of the time requisite for setting such an institution as this afloat, were eagerly praying for aid. He had great pleasure in stating, that there were already nearly 200 subscribers, and on behalf of an institution placed on so extended a basis of general good to masters and workmen connected with the building trades at large, he felt assured that the public no less than the trades themselves would not be appealed to in vain.

An appeal on behalf of the Institution was then read by the secretary, together with the rules and regulations; after which

Lord Robert Grosvenor, in moving the first resolution,—"That this meeting is of opinion that the Builders' Benevolent Institution is a charity that is both expedient and necessary, and merits the support of all classes, more especially those connected with the building trades,"—said, that though unwell he had felt too deep an interest in the establishment of such an institution to excuse himself from attendance on that account. He approved of the principles and the rules and regulations already so clearly explained to them. He had no conception that so many families and individuals were connected with the building interests of the metropolis. He was well aware that the class of workmen did as much as they in general could in earning a sustenance for themselves and families from day to day; and that therefore in unfortunate misfortune they were necessarily thrown on public resources. The class immediately above these too, though better able to fight their way in an emergency, had still as a class, much hardship and difficulty to cope with, and it certainly was the duty of their more fortunate fellow members and indeed of the higher classes in general, to assist the lower in misfortune. Of self-dependence, such as this institution more particularly inculcated, we were certainly bound to approve. He trusted, although the members would look also to the benefit of those under them who were less able to be self-dependent, that this would never be lost sight of. He felt personally grateful to their chairman, who took so leading an interest in these matters; and congratulated him on the feeling way in which he had treated his subject. It was usual to hit upon some more or less delicate compliment towards the promoters of any commendable undertaking; but he feared the question he was now about to ask would scarcely come under the class of compliments. What had they been doing down to 1847? This young one was as yet in its swaddling clothes! Look at the almshouses of other trades. These almshouses must have had a builder. Who was he that he did not teach his brethren to go and do likewise? Now, at all events, they ought to be zealous and diligent in the promotion of their worthy object; and he trusted that at next year's general meeting they would have a good report of progress. He regarded this as laying the first stone of a noble building.

The resolution was seconded by Sir Benjamin Hall, who said: He had as great pleasure in being associated with them in so good a cause, as he had often had in acting with his noble friend, the mover, in reference to bills brought into the Commons, where they sat together. One great advantage in a metropolitan community consisted in the opportunity afforded to many who desired it, to meet together for the amelioriation of their fellow creatures. The great beauty of that community was its local self-governing and self-supporting system. When any class of the public came forward with that view they ought to be upheld. He should have much gratification in being a subscriber.

The resolution being then put to the vote, was carried unanimously.

Colonel Wood then moved the second resolution, approving of the laws; and said:—It might be presumptuous in him to propose such rules and regulations; but he could at least see that they were clear, comprehensive, and liberal. The 7th provided for the complete publication of accounts. The 19th constituted a managing committee of thirty, in which, with the change of one-third every year, assurance was given of the superintendence of a body of men fully and properly representing the trade; and though not too numerous, such a committee certainly constituted a liberal representation of the whole body, whose habits of business and occupation must render them peculiarly conversant with such duties; so that, if these rules were not perfect, they might, by the benefit of such experience, be brought to that perfection which the admirable objects in view demanded at their hands.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Spencer Smith, and carried unanimously.

Mr. David Salomons, in moving the third resolution, which pledged the meeting to co-operation, said that he had great pleasure in taking a part in the establishment of a Builders' Benevolent Institution, the more especially as he had a *penchant* for building himself, although in his dabblings amongst bricks and mortar he had certainly derived more amusement than profit. He, too, confessed he was astonished that so enlightened a body as the building trades of the metropolis had only now taken the initiative in the establishment of such an institution for behoof of those whose interprize did not always prevent the experience of a hard fate. To aid in warding off such a fate deserved their most earnest exertions.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Stephen Bird, who expressed his regret that they had not begun sooner, since the object appeared to be so well supported, not only by the building trades in general, but by those noblemen and gentlemen who had favoured them with their presence and their good will and assistance.

The motion was put, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Cochrane was happy to perform his humble part in the proceedings by moving that a subscription list be opened. Without the sinews of war nothing could be done. Unless supported by liberal subscriptions great disappointment would be experienced in the present object. He had to congratulate the meeting on the advent of so many members of Parliament as had assembled with them on the present occasion. It was exceedingly fortunate for them that we were now on the eve of a general election, as both members of Parliament and those aspiring to be members of Parliament were in a most amiable mood, and influenced by most liberal feelings on such an occasion! The engagements of builders exposed them to all the vicissitudes of the open air, to the summer's heat and the winter's cold; and he had always found them a body of men whose hearts were open to those generous emotions which somehow always were generated by avocations conducted more or less in the open air.

Lord R. Grosvenor moved the fifth resolution for the commencement of a fund to provide an asylum, which was seconded by Mr. Higgs, who said that it was not the first time that he had advocated such an institution, but now he had every confidence in its success. Annual subscribers were the most important of all subscribers, as on them the main stay of steady income depended. He trusted therefore, that gentlemen would either now or very shortly come forward and free the institution at once from all anxiety on this score. The motion was put and also carried unanimously.

The chairman, in moving thanks to those gentlemen who had attended, observed, that his noble friend, Lord Grosvenor, had hinted that their infant was now born. He was sure that its parents had had some trouble with it. But now, in the presence of its godfathers and sponsors, he trusted it would prosper and do credit to them all, and more especially that in its advanced maturity it would be of great advantage to its *poor relations*.

The chairman then moved that the thanks of this meeting be given to the noblemen and gentlemen who have this day honoured the meeting with their presence and assistance; and further,

"That a vote of thanks is due and is hereby given to the public press, and particularly to the editor of THE BUILDER, for bringing this institution before the notice of the public."

A member of the meeting begged to ask the chairman whether it was intended that subscribers should have no preference over non-subscribers, or to what comparative extent relief would be given to non-subscribers; as he was afraid that unless some strict limit were fixed, the amount of subscriptions might be considerably curtailed.

The chairman in reply said, that the institution was designed to be established upon a broad and enlightened principle of general benevolence, which he felt certain would meet with as general a support. Of course, it was left to the discretion of the committee of subscribers what relief should be given and to whom; but it might so happen that a non-subscriber had stronger claims on their immediate attention than even a subscriber.

A non-professional subscriber further remarked, that although he was a subscriber, he would derive no benefit from the institution, but the very liberality of its basis might induce others as well as himself to subscribe. Lord Grosvenor remarked that he could appreciate the feeling which suggested the question, but of course the committee would have the power to postpone the administration of relief to non-subscribers, so long as applications from subscribers were before them. The chairman added, that the founders of the institution did not wish it to be said that they had merely selfish motives in subscribing, and that the power of granting relief should be left open to the merits of each case as far as possible. He should be exceedingly sorry if the benevolent design of such an institution were narrowed by any such limitation as that hinted at. It was proposed, however, that the gentleman who started the question, should allow himself to be put on the committee for the purpose of doing all justice to his suggestion. Mr. Ellis said that he only wished to draw attention for an instant, in conclusion, to the fact that the institution was founded on its broad principle of benevolence, in order that the public in general might be induced to take the greater interest in its success, and certainly if the extension of a helping hand to their fellow tradesmen in the provinces, or to non-subscribing members of their class, should check the flow of subscriptions from the building trades, the selfish limitation of its benefits to themselves would

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